

## **Mohammed Choudhury**

State Superintendent of Schools

**Environmental Affairs** 

BILL: Senate Bill 95 DATE: February 3, 2022

SUBJECT: Public Schools – Anaphylactic COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and

Food Allergies – Guidelines and

Requirements

**POSITION:** Support

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## **EXPLANATION:**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) supports **Senate Bill 95 – Public Schools – Anaphylactic Food Allergies – Guidelines and Requirements**, which specifies that county boards of education are required to adopt, implement, and publish certain guidelines and strategies for reducing the risk to students with anaphylactic food allergies.

MSDE advocates for the health and safety of reducing the risk to students with anaphylactic food allergies and the guidelines cited in this bill are necessary to promote a healthy and safe school environment for students and staff who may be at risk for anaphylactic food allergies in the school setting. With the increased number of students diagnosed with food allergies in the school setting, it is necessary for schools to provide increased prevention education, awareness, and resources for the management of anaphylaxis due to food allergy reaction and other causes of anaphylaxis (e.g., insect bites, certain medications).

While the symptoms of anaphylaxis can be different between individual persons and also different for one individual over time, it is necessary for schools to implement prevention education and school health services guidelines to recognize the signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction and treatment to prevent serious health problems or death.

MSDE, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), will update and finalize the State school health services guidelines for anaphylaxis to be published on the MSDE website. The local county boards should use the state school health services guidelines for anaphylaxis to develop local guidelines, policies, procedures, and protocols to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in the school setting, including classrooms, common areas, cafeterias, and school sponsored events.

Senate Bill 95 - Public Schools-Anaphylactic Food Allergies – Guidelines and Requirements Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee February 3, 2022

MSDE is dedicated to supporting a safe and healthy school environment to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in the school setting, including classrooms and common areas. Adoption and implementation of the guidelines developed by MSDE and MDH at the local school system level for anaphylaxis are necessary to outline the roles and responsibilities of parents, administrators, school health care staff, food services employees, and school operations/school facilities staff, while fostering effective communication and collaboration between school staff, students, and parents.

We respectfully request that you consider this information in support of **Senate Bill 95**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or <a href="maryland.gov">ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov</a>, for any additional information.